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ABSTRACT

In the decade of the 1980s, education reform was dramatic and substantial in the South; virtually every state took steps to improve public education. Most raised the standards for student and teacher performance and increased teacher salaries; some instituted new remedial education programs and early childhood programs for disadvantaged children. All increased state funds for education, either from revenue growth under existing tax structures, or from new taxes. This booklet summarizes the proceedings of a conference on southern education which focused on the continuing dynamics of education reform. Topics of the conference included: (1) governors as educational leaders; (2) effects of educational reform; (3) challenges to education reform; (4) testing; (5) teacher quality and supply; (6) education as viewed by the U.S. Department of Education; (7) the problems and possibilities of research in education; (8) the continuing equity issues; and (9) the philanthropic response to education reform. A list of conference participants is included. (ALL)

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Education in a Changing South: New Policies, Patterns and Programs

REPORT ON THE CONTINUING CONFERENCE

Sponsored by the Southern Education Foundation, Inc.

The Continuing Dynamics of Education Reform

November 13 - 14, 1985
Atlanta, Georgia

RC017930

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New Policies, Patterns and Programs

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The Continuing Dynamics
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The Southern Education Foundation wishes to express its appreciation to many individuals and organizations who helped in planning and implementing the conference. The advice provided by our Advisory Committee was invaluable. The work of the members of the task forces informed to a large degree the substance of the two-day discussion. In addition, a variety of busy individuals with major responsibilities agreed to take time out to come to Atlanta to participate in the conference. We wish to express special thanks to the Ford Foundation, the Lilly Endowment and the Carnegie Corporation for their assistance in funding this meeting. Special thanks are also due Cynthia Brown for her valuable sugestions and recommendations and for her service as conference *rapporteur.*

INTRODUCTION

Ruby Martin

In 1983, the Southern Education Foundation, through its Public Policy Program, began its annual Continuing Conference examining "Education In a Changing South: New Policies, Patterns and Programs." In its first two years the Continuing Conference considered issues related to "New Partnerships for Human and Economic Development" and "New Federal and State Roles in Education." In 1985, the subject of the Continuing Conference was the crucial topic of "The Continuing Dynamics of Education Reform."

Nowhere has education reform in this decade been more dramatic and substantial than in the South. Virtually every southern state has taken major steps to improve public education. Most have raised standards for student and teacher performance and increased teacher salaries; some have instituted new remedial education programs and early childhood programs for disadvantaged children. All have targeted increased state funds on education either from revenue growth under their current tax structure or from newly enacted taxes.

The Southern Education Foundation has encouraged and followed closely the education reform process in the South. It is deeply concerned that improved equity and excellence in southern education go hand in hand, and it continues its efforts to ensure this. As a part of those efforts, it has initiated the annual Continuing Conference on education issues and this year considered specifically the promises of and challenges to the successful continuation of the education reform movement and implementation of its many new programs and provisions.

At this year's conference, Ruby G. Martin characterized SEF's interest in education reform as follows. She said,

> *Education in a changing South is the Southern Education Foundation's issue. SEF is sticking with that issue . . . [Its] leaders . . . must be commended for the dogged way in which they have continued to pursue this issue — to exploit it, to join it with other issues, and to bring together people like us as individuals, organizations, agencies, and advocates that have the resources, the jurisdiction, the will, and the obligation to find ways to resolve the issues.*

A summary of conference proceedings follows.

Elridge W. McMillan, *President*
Southern Education Foundation

Robert A. Kronley, *Senior Consultant*
Southern Education Foundation

GOVERNORS AS EDUCATIONAL LEADERS IN THE SOUTH

"If you are going to be a success, and if you are going to be able to compete in today's economy . . . you must be educated."

Joe Frank Harris

Joe Frank Harris

Throughout the South, governors have moved education improvement to the top of their agendas and initiated major reform proposals. This year's Continuing Conference began with a keynote address from one such education-minded governor, Governor Joe Frank Harris of Georgia.

Governor Harris was the sponsor of the Georgia Quality Basic Education ACT (QBEA) passed into law in April 1985. This major education reform program provided $688 million in new education funds, including funds for statewide full-day kindergarten, teacher incentives, uniform statewide curriculum and accountability measures.

Governor Harris spoke to the conference about "the why" behind education reform in Georgia, specifically what motivated the push for change and why so many people joined in the effort. A primary motivation was the relationship of education reform to economic development. The Governor noted that education improvements cannot be achieved unless the state economy is moving forward, and that improvements in the economy cannot take place without a sound education system to support them. He said, "The key to a prosperous and successful future for Georgia is a quality workforce."

Governor Harris made education improvement a high priority from the moment he began campaigning for statewide office. He set forth as his goal the provision of a quality basic education for all children in Georgia regardless of where they lived. Once elected, he appointed a prestigious Education Review Commission and passed on their recommendations in an unprecedented special education message to the General Assembly, which in turn

responded enthusiastically and positively. Better yet, because of the healthy, growing Georgia economy, the substantial funding increases necessary for the education improvements have been raised through tax revenue growth and no tax increases.

Governor Harris noted his agreement with the Georgia State Superintendent of Education who said that in the past Georgians were more concerned with education as a process and not so concerned about the products being produced. The new reforms have reversed this pattern.

While it is too early to determine the impact on Georgia students, Governor Harris believes education reform has stimulated economic growth. In the last three years, Georgia has gained 500,000 new jobs. In 1985, it has added another 180,000 new jobs and $15 billion in new investment. Such growth is projected to continue through the year 2000.

PROMISING EFFECTS OF EDUCATION REFORM

"[A] positive difference in education will only come when partnerships are formed in education between state leaders, local leaders, parents, and other citizens in the education community."

Alice V. Harden

Many of the participants in the Continuing Conference are primarily concerned about improving education for poor, disadvantaged and minority children and youth. Most of them agree that recent education reforms have not been aimed chiefly at such "at risk" students and that there have been negative — if usually unintended — consequences for them. However, there have also been significant education benefits for disadvantaged youngsters from reforms in many states, especially in the South. One session of the Continuing Conference was devoted to discussion of such promising efforts. People from three states undergoing major reforms discussed the different experiences in their states.

Alice V. Harden

George B. Autry, President of MDC, Inc. introduced this session. He referred to a recent MDC survey of state education commissions in which MDC found little focus on programs to aid disadvantaged youth. He noted though that more such programs are being initiated. He cited specific examples such as new early childhood and remediation programs in Delaware; vocational education reform in several states; new school-to-work transition programs in Tennessee and North Carolina; a dropout prevention program in North Carolina; and, in Kentucky, new recognition of and programs aimed at the problem of parent illiteracy and undereducation, which is directly related to the failures of children.

Alice V. Harden, President of the Mississippi Association of Educators, discussed education reform in Mississippi as a positive but "unfinished" agenda. In December 1982, the Mississippi legislature passed an education reform act, proposed initially by former Governor William Winter, which is designed to overhaul the state's public education system. The education reform act covers early childhood programs, teacher selection and certification procedures, curriculum strengthening, administrative management

training, salary enhancement, and perhaps most significantly, establishment of a state compulsory attendance law.

Harden stated that while the education reform act has been recognized as the foundation upon which Mississippi can promptly address and resolve problems such as economic development, health care, and other human needs, its promise has not been fulfilled — the Mississippi legislature has failed to fund some of the most needed reform programs. Future funding of the education reforms remains in doubt.

Harden asserted that, "Putting substance into the Education Reform Act of 1982 is the unfinished agenda." However, Harden believes that Mississippi has adopted an aggressive legislative program that when implemented will significantly upgrade and improve public education in Mississippi. She concluded, "The strength of Mississippi tomorrow will depend on maintaining and improving education today."

"The Education Improvement Act has ignited public education in South Carolina. Implicit in the EIA is the casting off of the mental straight jacket that has impeded educational progress . . . for decades."

Hayes Mizell

Hayes Mize

Hayes Mizell is the South Carolina Coordinator of the State Employment Initiatives for Youth Demonstration project, Vice Chairman of the South Carolina Basic Skills Advisory Commission, and an elected member of the Richland County District One Board of School Commissioners. He was intimately involved with the enactment in 1984 of the South Carolina Education Improvement Act (EIA). At the Continuing Conference he discussed positive results to date from implementation of this legislation.

Mizell announced that shortly after the Conference, the South Carolina Department of Education would be publishing a report assessing the 1984-85 school-year outcomes from the EIA. Mizell believes the report — entitled "What Is The Penny Buying for South Carolina?" — is objective. The report is fascinating both because of its content and because of what it reveals about how one state is attempting to assess the outcomes of its reform initiatives. It shows significant, measurable improvements in school attendance, the dropout rate, achievement in reading and math for students participating in compensatory and remedial programs, and the number of students participating in advanced placement courses.

Mizell shared his thoughts about important trends established by the South Carolina education reform legislation and by efforts to enact and implement it.

1. Major state financial commitment to disadvantaged children.

The most historic component of the EIA is that South Carolina for the first time has made a major financial commitment to improving the academic performance of underachieving children. For example, school districts now provide a special half-day, full-year program for those four-year-olds determined to be at greatest risk of not being successful when they enter school.

An even more significant commitment has been made to students who do not meet the state's basic skills standards. More than $55,000,000 in state funds will be spent on compensatory and remedial services to address over 200,000 cases of basic skills deficiencies of children in grades one through 12.

Mizell explained that,

> *The challenge before us now is two-fold. First, we must work for the quality implementation of the developmental, compensatory and remedial programs in order to justify the financial commitment by the legislature. Secondly, we must continue to delineate, explain, and propose solutions for the many remaining, unmet educational needs of underachieving children.*

But the major point is that the ice has been broken. South Carolina has made a choice to put its tax dollars where its standards impact on children.

2. Widespread participation in its implementation.

The education reform initiative has introduced many different actors into the process of monitoring, assessing, and fine-tuning efforts to implement educational change. The whole process of program implementation has been opened up to the scrutiny and involvement of many different groups of people. The EIA itself mandated participation in implementation decisions by legislators, business people, and other citizen committees. It required the establishment of a Division of Public Accountability within the State Department of Education.

The EIA also renamed previously mandated teacher, parent and student School Advisory Councils in every school as School Improvement Councils, and required them to assist with the "development and monitoring of school improvement." In addition, the State Superintendent took the initiative to create "implementation councils" at the local, regional, and state levels. The councils are designed to provide grassroots feedback on the progress and problems in implementing the EIA. They are composed of teachers, administrators, school board members and lay persons.

These various monitoring and accountability groups are sometimes repetitive and cumbersome. Mizell said,

> *But they have also provided an unprecedented opportunity . . . for communication among groups of people who would otherwise have little common ground on which to work. Perhaps most important of all, this involvement gives diverse constituencies a direct stake in ensuring the success of the EIA.*

3. New use of incentives to bring about change.

South Carolina has embraced the concept of incentives to stimulate improvement in the performance of teachers, principals, and schools rather than trying to achieve change solely by mandating standards or by creating new instructional programs. The EIA seeks to encourage and recognize initiatives by educators and school communities. The term "merit pay" is not used; instead the term "teacher incentive program" is used and a variety of such programs are employed.

By the end of this decade South Carolina could be spending as much as $22 million annually on some form of teacher incentive program. There will be a similar though less costly program for principals.

An especially novel aspect of the EIA is the school incentive grant pro-

gram. Schools and school districts will receive cash awards for "exceptional performance" when compared to their own previous performance. The appropriation for this program is $7 million annually. A school will have complete discretion in using its achievement grant, conditional only on the School Achievement Council providing advice and the grant being used to make further achievement gains and to improve excellence in the school.

Mizell pointed out that there are many challenges that lie ahead. Some initiatives may not work out as hoped. There will almost certainly be perennial struggles to maintain the funding base even for the most effective programs. But, he added, "the EIA has created the means and has generated the energy for significantly improving the quality of education in South Carolina."

Bob J. Nash, the Senior Assistant to the Governor of Arkansas for Economic Development, discussed the relationship between educational improvement and economic development. Contemporary economic conditions in the United States and the world are forcing the linkage between education and economic development. Many mature industries are being lost to low wage, low skill workers in developing countries, never to return. In Arkansas, the increase in manufacturing and service jobs is not developing fast enough to compensate for the loss of jobs in the more mature industries. Industrial recruitment as a single strategy to support economic development looks bleak.

Governor Bill Clinton and the Arkansas legislature decided to take aggressive action to address these problems. Their primary goal is to develop a first-class education and economic development program designed to prepare the Arkansas population for the jobs of the future. Among other things, they appropriated new education money; set higher standards; required student, teacher and administrator accountability; offered new adult education programs; and expanded higher education courses.

Nash said that in order to link education and economic development efforts there must be commitment to and salesmanship for this relation-

ship and its value from the Governor and legislature. Nash then provided specific Arkansas initiatives, including:

- placement of corporate representatives on education commissions and requests of corporations to put educators on their boards;
- establishment of a state science and technology authority charged with identifying professors and researchers in colleges and universities who have ideas to patent with commercial application;
- establishment of "business incubator" programs at colleges and universities operated in collaboration with the private sector;
- provision of financial incentives for the private sector to have research done at universities;
- establishment of school-based economic development programs where high school students actually run profit-making businesses sponsored by the schools with advice from local business people; and
- the hiring of industrial coordinators in the schools to assure that vocational education programs are training students for real jobs.

There is a strong belief in Arkansas that minority and disadvantaged people benefit from these activities. Nash said the Governor appoints black representatives to every state board and commission according to their proportion of the population. There are new minority faculty programs to finance graduate and doctoral education. Black private colleges are used to provide adult basic education. There is a new equal opportunity research center in the state department of education to help local school systems recruit and hire more black teachers.

A short, but lively question and answer period followed the remarks of Harden, Mizell and Nash. A variety of topics were raised including the dropout issue and monitoring reforms for educational equity concerns.

In response to a question, Hayes Mizell commented that as yet the South Carolina education reform efforts have resulted in no improvement in the proportion of high school dropouts. While the dropout rate has not increased, Mizell noted that the state is now making a strong commitment to get students into school early and to provide a better education program for them, but once students decide to leave they are gone and ignored by the education system.

George B. Autry noted that advocacy on behalf of dropouts has been inadequate. He added that part of the reason dropouts have been ignored is because there is not a good enough understanding of "the anchor that weighs down the economy by the people who drop out." A declining pool of young people will enter the labor force of the future. A growing proportion of the declining pool is poor, black and undereducated. It is on these people's shoulders that there will be an increasing national debt, increasing national defense expenses, increasing transfers payments especially for the elderly, and an increasing underclass which will need support. In Autry's words "we have got to put it to the American people in those terms — those terms of their pocketbook."

In response to another question, Mizell noted that several potential equity problems (e.g. increased use of tracking, using remedial programs as "dumping grounds" for difficult students) have not been specifically addressed in South Carolina. He said they are ripe for careful monitoring. He added that he would like to believe that in this new era the state would be more cooperative than in the past at looking at these issues.

CHALLENGES TO EDUCATION REFORM: FINANCE

The success of education reform depends on "the extent to which the states' fiscal health continues to be in reasonably good shape and the extent to which groups like this and advocacy groups can keep pressure on the state governments to [continue] investing money in education, to keep looking at the reforms they have enacted and how they are working, and to make adjustments where they are not."

Terry Hartle

Terry Hartle

While many states have enacted substantial reforms to improve education, the price tag is high. To date, states have financed reforms out of increases in current revenue sources or from new revenue sources, particularly increases in the general sales tax earmarked for education. However, some education reform financing schemes fall disproportionately on the poor or are threatened by future economic uncertainty. Three panelists at the Continuing Conference discussed financial challenges to education reform. They raised specific concerns about: state failure to take account of the differences in ability of local school systems to finance education improvement initiatives; uncertainties raised by the combination of increasing state costs for reform, state revenue dependence on national economic health, and unlikely help from the federal government; and growing reliance on the most regressive form of taxation — the general sales tax.

Page McCullough, Director of the Atlantic Center for Research and Education, began this session by discussing problems raised for the implementation of effective and equitable education reforms by state finance systems. She used North Carolina as her example. She focused on two North Carolina reforms:

1. The adoption of the Basic Education Plan, the blueprint of the improved state education program. The Basic Education Plan is to be phased-in over the next eight years. It is universally described as "a means to provide every child in North Carolina with the same educational opportunities," according to McCullough.
2. The division of funding between local and state governments. The new provisions are not yet law since they have only been passed by the Senate. The Senate bill requires that local governments take complete funding responsibility for facilities, utilities, and maintenance, while the state pays for the entire instructional program.

Currently, schools in North Carolina receive about 65 percent of their funding from the state. The state doles out its money on a per pupil basis only. Theoretically, the state pays for operating costs, but the state-local distinctions have become blurred with some local jurisdictions adding substantial local funds for operating costs.

In the last 10 years the local share of education expenses has risen from 17 to 25 percent. Thus, the share of the education budget most dependent on local wealth has grown in importance. There are several factors which result in the level of local financial support of the schools.

Differences in property wealth have the most direct impact on the ability of local systems to fund their schools. In 1982-83 the wealthiest North Carolina school system, Chapel Hill, had six times the per pupil property

wealth of the poorest system, Red Springs. Although these systems levy basically the same tax rate, Red Springs spent only $235 per pupil in local funds and Chapel Hill spent $977 per pupil in local funds. McCullough has found that most per school systems tax themselves at rates equal to wealthy systems.

Median family income and sales tax receipts also affect revenue for schools. While wealth measures change over time, the pattern of economic development in North Carolina seems to point to poor systems remaining poor. From 1973 to 1981, 20 percent of industrial development occurred in only six North Carolina counties. Variations in wealth measures result in substantial differences in local contributions to schools and, therefore, substantial differences in resources available to students.

The new reform efforts will have little or no effect on this situation. Neither the Basic Education Plan nor the funding responsibility bill take into account local ability to pay. The Basic Education Plan provides more resources but treats every school system the same. Obviously, this benefits the richer systems which have more money to start with. Many of them already meet or almost meet the Basic Education Plan standards while poor districts fall far short. McCullough said, "While the state has recognized the importance of a floor of educational resources, it has not recognized how far below the floor some systems fall."

The Basic Education Plan also does not contain a mechanism to consider special needs and problems in individual districts. The section of the plan providing for new remedial education programs was the only section which did not receive full first year funding from the legislature.

Given wealth disparities among North Carolina school systems, the Basic Education Plan does not address all the immediate needs of schools which fall far short of its standards. Nor does it give special attention to the problems of poor districts in areas such as recruiting teachers and the loss of federal Chapter I funds. The Senate facilities bill also does not address the issue of ability to pay, nor is it based on careful analysis of facilities needs.

Terry Hartle, Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, discussed how, two and one-half years into the reform movement, education reforms are being financed. Hartle set forth his "good news" and "bad news" predictions. He began with "good news" and the comment, "There is plenty of it."

- Education is very high on the public agenda. Public opinion polls continue to show that the public wants more money spent on education and improved quality of schools.
- Education remains high on the political agenda at the state level.
- Teacher salaries are moving upward. Over the last two years, their increase outpaced the cost of living for the first time in a decade.
- Federal education funding, at least in the short term, seems likely to stay relatively constant.
- Some states are continuing to explore new revenue sources for education.

On the other hand, there is also "bad news" and uncertainty about the future of education financing over the next four or five years. Since the education reform movement is state-led, it will depend on state governments and state finances for its future. There are several potential problems:

- The programs have been largely "front-loaded." They have been enacted enthusiastically but much of the high cost will come later when new teacher

plans become increasingly expensive. Whether there will be a commitment to these costs by the next generation of state legislators is unclear.

- Despite state efforts to broaden the revenue base, state revenues remain very vulnerable to broader economic developments.
- State budgets are somewhat at the mercy of federal policy such as revenue sharing and federal tax reform. Eliminating the state and local deductions from federal taxes would have a profound effect on high tax states.
- It is unclear whether the state tax cut movement is alive or dead.

Many states illustrate the financial difficulties which are likely to increase. For example, in Mississippi funds are short for continued teacher salary wage increases, and a deficit is projected for Louisiana this year.

Besides the "good news" and "bad news" there are other areas of uncertainty:

- The key variable for state education finance is the nation's economic health. The bottom line is that an economic downturn is likely by the end of this decade.
- Another important variable is the time it will take to resolve the teacher crisis and the likelihood of increasing teacher shortages and misassignment. (Urban and rural districts with high concentrations of educationally disadvantaged students will be hardest hit.)
- Elementary and secondary education reform must compete with other education and social problems needing attention such as preschool education, especially for disadvantaged children; finance and quality of higher education, as well as problems in minority enrollment; and prison overcrowding.
- The biggest uncertainty is the future role of the federal government, both in fiscal and budgetary terms, and in its oversight of federal social programs. For example, now the federal government is virtually ignoring the very high error rate in the student financial aid programs. The federal role in education is likely to remain minimal for the foreseeable future.

Steve Suitts, on leave of absence as Executive Director of the Southern Regional Council, discussed his concern about how education reform is being financed, especially in the South. In his view, "The South is leading the nation toward education reform with a mixed promise of both achievement and disappointment." The reforms are costly at both the state and local levels. To meet the demands for new revenue, southern states have turned primarily to the general sales tax.

Steve Suitts

A majority of the 11 southern states have increased their sales taxes since 1980. As a result three southern states, Florida, Mississippi, and Tennessee, generated almost half their state income from the general sales tax. A majority of southern states collected a larger percentage of revenue from the general sales tax than the national average. Since 1983, four more states have added one cent to their sales tax for education. By 1985, the average southern state will generate 38 percent of its revenue form the general sales tax compared with 28 percent in the average non-southern state.

Suitts noted that, "This pattern, viewed over time, shows that education reform is now responsible for greatly exacerbating the South's regressive state tax system." The sales tax is the most regressive type of tax. The poor pay a larger percentage of their income in sales tax than other groups. In five southern states food is still subject to the sales tax.

Local governments are also increasing sales taxes. Since 1980 almost

half of the southern states have increased the local sales tax option. The effects of the local sales tax also worsen the regressive burden of the southern tax systems. Some cities, for example New Orleans and San Antonio, rely on sales taxes for at least 50 percent of their revenues.

While businesses are supposedly very interested in education reform, their tax support of reforms has not increased. No southern state has chosen a substantial business tax in the last five years as a primary means to finance education reforms. In a majority of southern states, as sales taxes have increased, business taxes have decreased.

In Suitts' opinion, "Without dramatic changes in policy, this pattern of taxation in the name of education is likely to continue." The most costly items of reform are yet to come. The pattern set in motion for financing education in the South is for the poor to carry the heaviest tax burdens.

Unless education reform is accompanied by tax reform in the South that trend will surely continue. Suitts said,

> *If the promises of education reform become disappointments, then the South will have committed . . . another unspeakably cruel irony by having the poor black and white families of our region carry the heaviest tax load for the purpose of improving the education of middle and upper class children. Even if the promises of success are real, . . . the poor of the South are paying a very high price for education reform today.*

Other Challenges to Education Reform

In addition to issues of finance, there are other crucial issues which are challenging the effective implementation of educational reforms, especially for disadvantaged students. Panelists at this session of the Continuing Conference discussed three of these challenges — misuse of testing, problems of teacher quality and supply, and the need for continuing attention from state legislatures.

Donald W. Burnes, formerly of the Education Commission of the States, presided over this session. He initiated the discussion by raising 10 key questions about the education reform movement:

1. Given what is known about how local school districts go about the change process, how should all the relevant parties — teachers, principals, parents, and other citizens — be actively involved in developing reforms?
2. How can effective implementation of reform, including oversight, be assured?
3. How will adequate long-term public support be secured, especially for financing reforms?
4. How can the impact of reforms be measured for both intended and unintended consequences, and will reforms be revised if necessary?
5. How will existing and new reforms provide adequate incentives and sufficient flexibility to encourage local districts and school buildings to undertake institutional renewal and school improvement?
6. How should effective local practices be identified and disseminated as models?
7. How should elementary and secondary reform be linked with higher education reform?
8. How should private sector involvement and interest in public education be developed and maintained?
9. How can education programs be maintained for "at risk" students as policymakers turn their attention to other types of students?
10. How can it be assured that "at risk" populations — both students and teachers — not become victims of the education reform movement?

Donald W. Burn

TESTING

"Our society is very good at equalizing demands without equalizing treatment."

Beverly P. Co

Beverly P. Cole, Education Director of the NAACP, addressed Burnes' last question about how to prevent "at risk" people from becoming victims of reform. She spoke specifically about testing.

In Cole's view there is an over-reliance and over-emphasis on testing throughout the nation. At least 19 states have exit exams for high school graduation, and 10 to 12 have test-based grade promotion policies. Cole finds the education reform movement more concerned with excellence than equity. It frequently confuses standards with expectations. In many cases "excellence" is defined as a quality that is measurable by scores on a standardized test. Most people do not realize how deeply standardized tests affect their lives.

There is now a shift to a more subtle way of excluding minorities from opportunities. Tests are a primary tool. However, "to question the test is not to question standards," Cole said.

In challenging testing, the NAACP is questioning all the mechanisms

Beverly Co

that go into their operation. It believes that diagnostic tests which are used to ascertain students' strengths and weaknesses so that proper remediation can be provided are valuable education tools. But to make test scores a goal rather than a means of problem identification is wrong. Cole said, "To use tests to penalize, screen, eliminate, track, and stratify is a gross misuse and abuse of the concept of evaluation and assessment." She added, "For blacks, tests have meant exclusion rather than inclusion into America's mainstream."

Standardized tests pose many problems for minority students:

- Tests are often not standardized on a representative minority sample;
- They predict imperfectly because of the many affective variables not measured;
- They are often culturally and linguistically biased, using vocabularies and illustrations which are unfamiliar to those not of the white middle-class culture;
- The emphasis on competition, pressure of beating the clock, and often the different race and attitude of the examiner is often a frightening experience;
- Tests require orderliness, attention to detail and many other test-taking skills which the students may or may not possess.

A good assessment program uses a multi-method approach. Cole said, *No one sole criterion, especially a paper-and-pencil test, should be used for such critical determinations as graduation, promotion, certification, college entrance or hiring. Yet the reality is that it is much easier and cheaper to accept a standardized test score than to analyze systematically the strengths and weaknesses of students by multiple means.*

Cole advocates that test-taking strategies be taught as an integral part of the school curriculum. Valid testing reflects the curriculum rather than determines it, and presupposes that the student has had an equal chance to be exposed to it. But this is frequently not the case, according to Cole.

A few years ago, the NAACP operated a pilot program, with partial funding from SEF, on SAT test preparation in three cities, including Atlanta. It targeted low-income, disadvantaged black students, who score low on SATs and cannot afford commercial coaching schools. A detailed evaluation of the project identified several factors which helped disadvantaged students:

- Counseling. Students had been inadequately counseled in high school. For example, they did not know about the PSAT or that the SAT could be taken more than once.
- Building their confidence. The program showed the students that the tests could be "learned and that test-taking is a skill which can be developed."
- Assistance with anxiety.
- Parent education.

The evaluation of this project showed that participants on average increased their SAT scores from 50 to 100 points during the two-month sessions.

Cole concluded:

When the technology of assessment is designed and used to facilitate growth rather than control and stratification, when it is used to foster inclusion in America's mainstream rather than exclusion, then maybe the NAACP can get out of the business of testing.

TEACHER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

"This nation must make a serious commitment to training more teachers before the teaching shortage becomes more severe and before we resort to more alternative certification methods. We need a commitment that says teaching is still an honorable profession which deserves the same respect accorded to law, medicine, technology and other highly valued fields."

Antoine M. Garibaldi

Antoine M. Garibaldi, Chairman of the Department of Education at Xavier University, addressed the issue of the supply and quality of teachers in the South as it relates to other challenges to education reform. He focused particularly on what southern states have done to increase the requirements for entry-level teachers and to improve the quality of current teachers as well as on the effects certification exams and increased educational requirements have had on the pool of minority teachers.

Antoine M. Garibaldi

Over the next eight years, both the Labor Department and the National Center for Education Statistics conservatively project that 190,000 teachers will have to be newly hired annually to maintain reasonable pupil-teacher ratios in the nation's classrooms. The largest school enrollment increases have occurred and will continue in the South and West. Elementary enrollment rose nationally by 54,000 children in 1984-85, and similar gains are expected into the 1990s. In addition, some research projections show that at least 53 major metropolitan areas will have student bodies composed primarily of nonwhite students by the year 2000.

At the same time that student enrollment is increasing, fewer young people are entering the teaching profession. Veteran teachers are leaving the classroom for better paying jobs, and a quarter of the current teaching force will reach retirement age by the early 1990s. In addition, fewer minorities are entering the profession and there are estimates that the nation's percentage of black teachers will drop from the current eight percent to less than five percent by the year 2000.

The shortage of teachers generally, and minority teachers in particular, is especially important to the South where nine of the 10 states with the greatest percentage of minority teachers in the 1982-83 school year were located. North Carolina had the lowest percentage with 22 percent and Louisiana and Mississippi were tied for the highest proportion of minority teachers with about 36 percent. These same nine Southern states are among the 15 states with the greatest percentage of minority students in school. Most of these have about 33 percent minority students; Louisiana and South Carolina have about 43 percent; Texas has 46 percent; and Mississippi, 52 percent.

Having described the context for current teacher supply and entry into the profession issues, Garibaldi turned to a discussion of teacher exams which education graduates must pass in order to obtain their initial certification. The National Teachers Examination (NTE) is the most common test used but Alabama, Florida, Georgia and California have developed their own state competency examinations. Kentucky, Maryland and Oklahoma are also developing their own exams.

Many states have also instituted tests at the end of the sophomore year for college students who want to become teachers. They often inappropriately use ACT or SAT tests which have predictive validity, but not for the sophomore year.

Blacks are scoring lower than whites on the NTE and other teachers certification tests as well as on entry tests for teacher education programs. Two researchers at the Educational Testing Service, Margaret Goertz and Barbara Pitcher, have recently completed analyses of NTE performance of about 150,000 examinees in seven states. Their results indicate that whites' mean scores are usually 18 to 20 points higher than the mean scores for blacks and 9 to 11 points higher than the mean scores for Hispanics. Two points are clear from the data. More individuals tend to pass where the qualifying scores have been set at a lower level, and some states' students tend to perform much better than other states' graduates on these same tests.

One of the greatest challenges to attracting more quality students into the teaching profession, especially minorities, will be students' abilities to first meet the established, standardized ACT and SAT qualifying scores. The second challenge will be achieving the qualifying scores on the NTE and other state competency examinations. Student failure to meet these state qualifying scores has already led to the elimination or decertification of teacher training programs in such states as Georgia and Florida, with more states likely to follow suit.

Action must be taken to increase the passing rates of blacks. Their high failure rates are due in part to both poor test-taking skills and insufficient academic training at the elementary and secondary school levels. In Garibaldi's view,

> *The last thing needed . . . is [for] colleges of education [to] spend more time teaching students how to pass a competency test. . . . What we really need are more highly able students for these programs, and that*

can only be achieved by providing enticing incentives such as forgivable loans or scholarships at both the state and the national levels. We must also have something to offer these students at the end of their undergraduate training by making sure that teachers' salaries are competitive with other professions.

Dangers in Implementing Reform

Jesse D. Oliv

Jesse D. Oliver is a member of the Texas legislature. He discussed victories and losses in the Texas education reform movement. He began by stressing the importance of reforming "public institutions whose health is essential to the future of low-income and minority Americans."

In Oliver's view, the recently enacted education reform legislation in Texas has improved the financing of education and education quality for minority and low-income students. It was achieved through coalition politics in which minorities played a major role. He learned important lessons from the legislative struggles, particularly the need for monitoring the implementation process after the legislation was passed. Consequently, over the last two years he has kept two full-time people in his legislative office in Austin to monitor legislation implementation to "ensure that we were getting what we had passed."

Oliver pointed out several dangers in Texas to educational reform implementation:

- The springing up of peripheral issues that arouse public sentiment. In Texas it is "no pass/no play." While important, it is not central to education reform, in Oliver's judgment.
- Taxes to finance education reform. In Texas, the Governor raised taxes for this purpose but had promised during his election campaign that he would not raise taxes.
- Local school district finance inequities.
- Urban-suburban conflicts which are in part racially motivated.
- Misunderstanding and conflict over bilingual education.
- Continuing growth of right-wing, religious school academies.
- Continuing conflicts over goals of education.
- Loss of minority teachers due to increased standards and competency testing.
- Textbook controversies.

He concluded that "We have to keep the legislature involved in the problems of education. . . . It is a continuing job."

During the question and answer period discussion of this session's issues continued. A questioner asked Dr. Garibaldi what should be done about college education programs which produce students with high failure rates on competency tests. Garibaldi answered that a first step is for states to require such institutions to develop a plan on how to improve their students' performance. Such colleges could begin by attracting more highly-qualified students than are now going into teaching. They could also help their students by having them take the NTE in parts, over time, which most students do not realize is possible. In some colleges, curriculum reform is also needed. Finally, teacher education programs need to tell weak students directly that they should not pursue teaching careers.

Jesse D. Oliver concurred that better qualified teachers are needed. But in his view, better students will not be attracted to teaching until salaries are

raised substantially. This is a responsibility for legislatures.

A questioner from Mississippi asked how financial inequities among school districts can be equalized. Jesse D. Oliver responded that politically it is virtually impossible "to bring down the wealthy school district." Consequently, additional state funds must be provided to low wealth school districts to offset the advantage of the wealthy districts. This is the only solution unless courts increase the pressure by saying funding inequities are unconstitutional.

EDUCATION: A VIEW FROM WASHINGTON

"[The] overall trends . . . are simply that we are doing a pretty decent job of supplying education to people in a quantitative sense, but we are not doing a satisfactory job in a qualitative sense, [even] though we are investing more and more in the enterprise, not only in the aggregate, but also on a per-student basis. . . . Our essential task as a society . . . is to bring our quality into sync with our quantity, and to do this without a lot of additional investment resources, [though that is not to say] there will not be any more resources anywhere for any purposes, or that all of our issues of quantity and participation have been solved. That is not true."

Chester E. Finn

Chester E. Finn, Jr. is the Assistant Secretary for Research and Improvement in the U.S. Department of Education. He spoke to the Continuing Conference about major trends and issues facing education in this country today including, but not limited to, the South. He drew from data of the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and a new Census Bureau study of education in the United States between 1940 and 1983:

1. There is more education being provided in a quantitative sense.

The percent of the population over age 25 which has completed high school or more has increased from 24 percent in 1940 to 73 percent in 1984. The percent of people over age 25 that completed four years of college or more jumped from five percent in 1940 to 19 percent in 1984 — "the highest proportion of college graduates ever in the history of the world."

There has been rising equality within the population in terms of the quantity of education received. In 1940, the black/white ratio of median number of years of education completed was .65. By 1982, it was .96. While high school completion rates of women and men are virtually identical, men still outstrip women with respect to college completion. However, among young adults, women have phenomenally narrowed the attainment gap during the last decade and in the 1980's, a majority of degree credit enrolled students have been women.

Though there are still marked differences in educational attainment by region — with the South being the lowest — these differences are narrowing. The coefficient of variation across the states with respect to average high school completion rates was 22.8 in 1950; it was 11.0 in 1980.

2. More resources are being devoted per unit to education than education outcomes indicate.

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

In current dollars, average expenditures per pupil for elementary and secondary education rose from $294 in 1955 to $3,182 in 1983. In constant 1980 dollars, per pupil expenditures rose from $849 to $2,427, i.e. they almost tripled during a little less than 30 years. Tuitions and fees charged by private colleges and universities — an unsatisfactory but nevertheless rough proxy for expenditures per pupil in higher education — rose 45 percent in constant dollars between 1963 and 1982.

Teachers' salaries did not fare well during this period. In constant 1980 dollars they rose between 1960 and 1973. Then, in constant dollars, they declined until 1981. They have been rising for the last three or four years, but by 1984 they had only climbed back to where they were in 1967 in terms of constant dollars.

3. There is not enough learning taking place in school, and in some respects there is less than before.

In this comment Finn was not referring to quantity of education to which students are exposed, but rather to the quantity they absorb or internalize, which he considers a reasonable definition of the quality of one's education. There are several well-known indicators of this problem.

Recently, NAEP published its Reading Report Card, which looked at nearly a decade-and-a-half of reading scores. It contains some good news about improvements in reading skills, particularly for minority students; but even after these improvements, there are still severe problems. The average 17-year-old black student reads at approximately the same level as the average 13-year-old white student. Hispanics score only a bit better.

Average SAT scores in 1962 totalled 980 on verbal and math average combined. They fell 90 points to 890 by 1980. Though there has been improvement in the past several years, SAT scores are only back up to 906. They are back to the level they were at in 1974 on their way down.

High school students are not taking enough core academic subjects. The Department of Education's *High School And Beyond* study examined transcripts of a sample of high school sophomores in 1980 who graduated in 1982 to determine how many Carnegie units they took during their four years of high school. The average total number of Carnegie units was 21 during the four years, a little bit more than five per year. But just 11.7 of these units were in English, foreign languages, math, science and social studies, i.e. slightly less than three courses per year in core academic subjects.

There are not very satisfactory indicators of learning at the college level, but Finn mentioned "two kinds of clues" about the quality situation in college. In 1983, 25 percent of all college freshmen were enrolled in what their colleges admitted were remedial math courses; 21 percent were enrolled in remedial writing courses; and 16 percent were enrolled in remedial reading courses.

Virtually all the ferment at the state and local level in connection with the excellence movement of the past several years has concerned outcome or performance levels. There have been bold changes in certain aspects of the delivery system, especially in the South. Also in the South, particularly, there have been increased resource levels. But, said Finn,

> *The reason [for reform] in every single instance, has been . . . perceptions among laymen, policymakers, elected officials and sometimes, among educators, that people are not learning enough. . . . "Are not learning enough for what, you can ask?" . . . My own view is that we are talking about the levels of education that we, as a nation, require for economic prosperity, for national security, for scientific and technological leadership, for cultural vitality, . . . for social cohesion and civic adequacy.*

Finn sketched 10 complicated issues which in his judgment need attention in the next few years. He said,

> *Each involves a dilemma or paradox; not a simple problem to go out and solve. They are all second-generation issues — the kind of problems that you give yourself when you set out to solve a prior set of problems.*

1. First grade readiness. The concept of standards has worked its way down to questions of whether first graders are ready for the level of learning they will be expected to engage in when they reach first grade. Some of them are ready and others are not. Lack of readiness can be developmental, the result of influences on children in their early years, or the preparedness of the system. Finn noted that,

> *In many instances, kindergarten is not enough . . . . On the other hand so long as early childhood education remains optional, there is a pretty good chance the kids who need it worse will not get it.*

2. Parent involvement. Finn commented,

> *There is an enormous amount of pious rhetoric about more parent involvement in education . . but we are practically never specific about just what it is schools have a right to expect of parents, or what parents have a right to expect of schools.*

Finn believes there is a reciprocity concept here, that each has a right to expect quite a lot of the other. He also believes in more parental choice in education, particularly for low-income and minority students.

3. The limits of schools as solvers of noncognitive problems, and the dearth of other institutions that are ready, willing, and able to take over. Finn said schools:

> *matter enormously [to students]. But the range in which they matter is limited very substantially to cognitive growth — skills, knowledge, sometimes behavior, sometimes values.*

4. The extraordinary child. To date, the education reform movement has been preoccupied "with the average level of learning of the average child." Finn now believes reformers must:

begin to ponder the consequences and the implications for extraordinary kids — the kids who are gifted, . . . slow, . . . handicapped, . . . do not speak English at home, [or have] other kinds of extraordinary characteristics to whom this reform movement has not been directed but who are, nevertheless, responsibilities of the schools.

Finn rejects the notion of tension between excellence and equality.

5. Tension between the "command and control" strategy of education reform and what we know about the homegrown, school-specific quality or "ethos" which characterizes really good schools. Experts do not know how to organize school systems in order to resolve this tension, which is built directly into the reform movement.

6. Two different visions of an ideal educational system. In Finn's view, each vision is appealing. The first calls for the egalitarian and democratic common school idea of the 19th century, in which students learned essentially the same things and were held to essentially the same standards. The other vision says, "a hundred educational flowers should bloom." Schools should differ from each other and people should select the kind of education they want for their children. This, too, is democratic, and egalitarian. The policy implications of these two visions are very different and hard to reconcile.

7. Content. What knowledge should students leave school possessing? This raises issues of textbooks, curriculum, testing, and teacher preparation.

8. Teacher quantity and quality. The teacher quantity and quality problems are striking at the same time, and the most obvious solutions to either problem make the other problem worse. Finn believes it is necessary to take a long view of what the teaching occupation should be like in ten years in order to work through the incrementalism and decrementalism of filling classrooms each September.

9. Quality of school leaders, particularly principals. The issue is whether administrators are being selected, trained, and licensed in the way to get the best qualified people with the best preparation.

10. Data on education, particularly information bearing on performance or outcomes. College assessment questions are in far worse shape than elementary and secondary school assessment questions. Comparative data, which policymakers need, is especially scarce. In Finn's view,

If you want to increase the amount of school sovereignty — and I do — you are only going to do that to the degree you have outcomes information that you can match against the standards which your policymakers can then set and enforce.

ADDRESS BY CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM H. GRAY

"There are two kinds of welfare in America . . . welfare for the rich and . . . welfare for the poor. The welfare for the poor tends to come through the appropriations process — the spending end of government. The welfare for the rich comes through the tax expenditures and shelters of the federal government. Thus when you try to reduce deficits only by spending cuts through the appropriation process, you leave one seg-

ment of America totally off the board. . . . If you want fair deficit reduction, you have got to put not only the poor folk up on the table but also . . . the rich folk."

William H. Gray

Congressman William H. Gray, Chairman of the powerful House Committee on the Budget, addressed the dinner meeting of the Continuing Conference. He spoke about the importance of education to this country and gave a first hand, insider account of the federal fiscal crisis of this country, one result of which is a diminished federal role in education.

William Gray

Congressman Gray began by noting that just as 100 years ago the federal government abandoned its proper role as the protector of all Americans, the federal government today appears intent on taking the same short-sighted view. He said,

> *The present administration seems not to understand that education is the mechanism through which we transfer knowledge and realize the human potential that is the foundation of this great nation's strength. . . . Our nation's wealth and well-being is derived from educated minds and trained hands.*

Congressman Gray pointed out that while the federal government provides only 10 percent of most local education budgets, it is an important 10 percent. Though he brought little good news from Washington, D.C., he reported that federal education programs for the disadvantaged will not suffer appropriations declines.

Congressman Gray regretted the need to focus primarily on the bad news out of Washington, D.C., specifically the budget deficit. He reported that through massive tax cuts favoring the rich and tremendous defense spending, President Reagan "has created more debt in his time in office than all other Presidents combined from George Washington to Jimmy Carter." Legislation in 1981 led directly to doubling of the national debt, and "took from the needy and gave to the greedy."

By 1985 the deficit and the national debt had become, according to Gray, "an anvil upon which there is tremendous pressure for hammering out the reduction of federal spending." Consequently, domestic programs, particularly those "that are valuable to the future of this country, are now in jeopardy in order to save America from drowning in a sea of red ink."

With the Graham-Rudman automatic deficit reduction legislation, the federal government has given "away its responsibility to govern," according to Gray. Federal education programs are included among those programs subject to across-the-board cuts.

There are only three ways to eliminate the federal budget deficit — cut spending, raise revenues, or pursue a combination of the two. All President Reagan's budgets have ignored the reality that even if all non-defense, discretionary spending were eliminated, there would still be a $40 to $50 billion deficit.

President Reagan has vetoed the idea of a tax raise. Never in the country's history has a tax raise been enacted without the support of the President. This is why Congress is unwilling to proceed alone to raise revenues. Congressman Gray concluded by saying:

We must reduce those deficits so the day will come when we can again pay attention to the true fundamentals of American life — such things as education, research, and health. . . . The pain should not fall unfairly on the backs of the young or the old or the helpless, while the rich and the privileged look on as happy bystanders in the sky boxes. . . What good is it to have a 600-ship Navy, all the F-16's in the world, and yet have no one who is educated enough to fly them or navigate those ships in defense of this country?

RESEARCH IN EDUCATION: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

"Just as we demean what teachers do, we tend to demean people who study teachers and education. Actually, there is a considerable amount of high quality research in education that compares very well to other fields. . . . It's much more important than people believe. . . . You cannot detach education research from its political context and . . . from other parts of the society, because education is related to what happens to families, which is related to what happens to employment and the economy and a variety of other things."

Gary Orfield

Education research studies have frequently played important roles in stimulating actions to improve educational opportunities for minority and disadvantaged children. Today, however, there is less federal and private financial support for research, and the federal government's research agenda has changed substantially. This session of the Continuing Conference explored what new opportunities for research are afforded by changes in federal education policy, what issues are presently being supported, and what issues are yet to be studied. Myrtis H. Powell moderated the session and initiated the discussion with comments on the tarnished image of education research in this country.

Gary Orfield

Denis P. Doyle, Director of Education Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, began the consideration of new research opportunities brought about by the significant changes taking place in federal education policies. Most of the changes, in Doyle's view, are "changes of indirection and indecision, omission rather than commission." The Reagan policy is "less of the same" which distinguishes it from the Carter policy of "more of the same." "Less of the same," Doyle asserted, has created "*de facto* new federalism. The states are picking up the pieces . . . having been starved not into submission, but self-reliance."

Doyle continued that the "lack of clear federal policy" has caused the states to assume a bigger share of the responsibility for education. This has resulted, he said,

> *in the best tradition of federalism, in an extraordinary transformation in education characterized by great variety, great diversity, and very substantial vitality in almost all the states.*

There are a few generic questions of federal policy which Doyle believes should be examined with federal resources. The principal "macro" question

is "to identify what works" particularly at the elementary and secondary levels. Outcomes as well as inputs should be studied.

Doyle's agenda of related "micro" or smaller level research includes as top priority research on how existing and naturally occurring programs which are effective for disadvantaged students work. This should include study of Chapter 1, Head Start, and the new "choice" program in Minnesota. Doyle also agrees with Chester Finn that the federal government must take the lead in stimulating better education data collection and analysis. In addition, he supports more comparative studies of education in industrialized nations.

With regard to federal support of education research, Doyle said there has always been ambivalence at the federal level. Different federal education priorities produce different education research objectives. Doyle characterized the objective of the Director of the National Institute of Education during the Carter Administration as the production of "findings that will permit us to develop education programs so effective that race, religion, and socioeconomic status will not longer predict educational outcomes." The Reagan Administration priorities for education are different and so its research agenda emphasizes "character, content, choice, standards of performance, and the excellence movement."

Doyle believes the nation is entering a new era in which Republicans and Democrats both feel "the public policy bolt has been shot." Public policy barriers have been removed, but now leaders are not sure what is the best policy direction to follow. Many education leaders are turning to questions of character and culture which are difficult to address analytically and are not readily susceptible to public policy remedies.

The education reform movement presents endless research opportunities. In Doyle's view the most important issue to examine is the fact that "the passion for reform in state capitals is leading inexorably to greater and greater centralization of education decision-making in state capitals." He added that "the problem has never been Washington taking over education but there is a real problem of state capitals taking over education." He

believes this is unwise because the span of control will be too great and the issues too complex for states to run the schools.

It is critically important, Doyle believes, for states to pick up some of the education research and development costs in a systematic way: "States can no longer blunder along by hunch, intuition, and guesswork."

Denis P. Doyle

Antoine M. Garibaldi made prescriptive suggestions about areas needing research. He listed several issues:

1. Dropouts. The key question is whether the higher high school requirements adopted in many states have actually increased student performance or have stimulated more dropping out and more academic failure. Many teachers are expressing concern about this.
2. Minority student matriculation and retention in colleges and universities. Black enrollment in colleges peaked in 1976, even though black high school graduation rates continued to grow throughout that decade. Consequently, the college-going rate of blacks went down.
3. Effects of new kindergartens on minority student preparation for school.
4. Federal research on vouchers and "choice" measures.
5. Teacher shortages. In addition to examining the consequences of testing, there needs to be study of what has precipitated the decline in education graduates and what can attract more people into teaching.
6. Role of historically black colleges. In the South, these schools produce almost 50 percent of the black college graduates even though they enroll a much lower proportion of all blacks in college.

Gary Orfield, a University of Chicago professor, began his remarks by praising the quality of much education research and noting that criticism of it is often unfair. In his view, people concerned about minority and disadvantaged children have a strong responsibility to try to influence the education research and data collection agenda because issues of concern to such children are not being raised adequately. He believes the Reagan Administration has an extremely strong political and legal agenda,

> *which is, in many ways, directly hostile to the interests of minority children in the United States. . . . They simply are opposed to many of the things that have gone on in society since the equality revolution began in the 1960's, and they're trying to turn it back.*

Several data and research issues that concern equity will not be financed by the federal government. Ways need to be devised to conduct this research and to gain and protect the necessary data. Orfield said there is a basic shrinkage of what is known about minority children from the federal data system. He noted particularly cutbacks in data collection and analysis by the federal Office for Civil Rights.

There is a very limited research capability in the United States for basic research. It is impossible to do it in 50 places. Many states do not have a single institution that is capable of doing serious research and very few have any funding available to do it.

Orfield is deeply concerned about the disappearance from the research agenda of the issues of race and class discrimination and inequality between the city and the suburbs. Some very powerful problems of racial discrimination and separation were addressed in the South but never in the North. School systems in major northern cities have become overwhelmingly minority and, at the same time, their tax base and political power in the state legislatures have declined very seriously. In addition, reduced transfer

payments from the federal government combined with greatly increased but unfunded requirements from state governments are having dire consequences for minority and poor youngsters in the United States. Orfield believes "the consequences are going to be extraordinarily serious."

Orfield described the situation in high schools in the metropolitan Chicago area, which he believes is characteristic of many large, metropolitan areas in the country. Almost no high schools in Chicago compare with the average high school in the suburbs. There are fewer teachers; the teachers come from much weaker teacher training institutions; the curriculum is unequal, basic pre-collegiate courses do not exist in many schools; and some schools do not even give college entrance examinations. The average student is so far below grade level that it is impossible for students to attend classes at grade level.

There are no counselors in Chicago high schools, or the counselors that do exist are occupied with discipline and other things that suburban counselors do not have to worry about. Surveys show that minority children are much more influenced about college programs by counselors and teachers than white children are.

Almost half of the students do not finish high school in Chicago. Those who do finish are very far below grade level. They attend what Orfield calls "neighborhood-level community colleges." The attrition rate in the predominantly black community colleges is 90 percent. Most of these community colleges operate way below grade level. Very few students transfer from them successfully; those who do primarily transfer to the lowest ranked four-year college in the state of Illinois, which is the largest supplier of teachers for the Chicago public schools.

In Orfield's view,

> *Powerless people in the society now are out-of-fashion. They are being blamed for having a defective culture, inadequate motivations and a variety of other things, and the structural forces that are affecting their institutions are not being seriously studied anymore.*

Orfield listed a variety of research issues related to these concerns:

- The consequences of federal political and legal actions that are being taken, as well as funding or defunding actions.
- The situation in central city school districts: What is happening to them? What capacity do they have? What kinds of resources do they have? What is their teacher base?
- The condition of Hispanic children. There are huge surges of Hispanic enrollment in public schools that nobody is studying seriously.
- The linkage between dropouts, employment and business. Experiments going on in New York and Boston and a few other places deserve very high priority in research.
- Desegregation. There are noncognitive effects of school desegregation that relate to putting children in middle-class institutions and giving them a chance to get into employment, higher education and a variety of other things, from a middle-class, multi-racial experience.
- State governments' interest in equity issues and their civil rights capacity.

Orfield believes private foundations must consider very seriously their role in the research process. Most agenda-setting research of the last two decades has either been financed by the federal government or by two or three major foundations. Not only has the federal government dropped its

emphasis on large issues of inequality and discrimination, but there have also been few recent large, privately-funded studies. Private foundations, in Orfield's view, need to refocus their efforts since they are the only institutions in society with the resources and capacities to generate agenda-setting research. They need to provide a counterpoint, not an echo, to the current trend.

Orfield concluded his remarks by endorsing many of the issues that the Reagan Administration is researching. He urged that these issues be pursued with a sense of the structure of inequality in our society. Otherwise they could lead to situations where the victims of past discrimination are blamed and punished rather than provided with support mechanisms and resources to make it possible for them to meet the higher standards that, "in many ways are useful contributions to education if they are tied to proper concerns and proper interventions."

CONTINUING EQUITY ISSUES

"Too many policymakers are willing to take the short leap from the belief that schooling has worsened to the conclusion that the policy initiatives of the immediate past were the culprits. This in turn leads to the conviction that we cannot achieve quality and equity at the same time."

Robert Brown

Throughout the Continuing Conference there was a special focus on equity in the process of education reform. Participants were concerned that the needs of minority and disadvantaged as well as more advantaged students be met in new education improvement programs. Speakers at this session of the Conference addressed specific equity issues raised by inadequate citizen participation in and monitoring of education reforms, school dropouts, and vocational education.

Robert Brown, formerly Executive Director of the Southeastern Public Education Program, is a private consultant. He spoke about the involvement of parents and community-based organizations in educational reform. He noted that in the South these two groups have not been included in most reform efforts.

Most of the reports advocating reform have given little attention to parent involvement as a vehicle for educational improvement. Instead most recommendations for improvement have come from a top-down perspective. There are virtually no substantive requirements for parental involvement in state-sponsored legislation across the South.

In Brown's view, there are two reasons for this attitude toward community and parental involvement:

- The composition of the leadership of the education reform movement. The state commissions which developed proposals for governors and legislators had almost no participation from community-based advocacy organizations.
- The premises on which the education reform movement operates. The motive and beliefs on which new programs are being built — specifically

that the quality of education has declined — are not accurate. The schools may not be offering adequate education, but they have improved, especially in the South since desegregation.

Most reform reports talk about improving education for all children, but the rhetoric is not matched by specific proposals. Brown said, "Mandated parental involvement is often avoided and regarded as an example of a policy of the 1960's and 1970's which contributed little to educational progress."

Brown urged that community-based organizations be involved in monitoring education reforms. They have a positive role to play, though it will be difficult. Federal mechanisms for raising problems, which were once helpful, no longer function due to the current political climate.

In Brown's view, the shifting of the action to state government further imperils efforts of parents and community groups to seek change. However, he noted, "Adversity and resistance are nothing new to change-oriented groups."

Brown listed a series of questions which need to be monitored as education reforms are implemented in the South. Are poor school districts receiving their share of new education funds? Are state funds filling the gaps caused by decreased federal funds? Are children "at-risk" receiving their fair share of new funds? Are retention rates decreasing as higher high school standards are mandated? Are remediation programs merely sophisticated tracking programs? In addition, questions must continue to be asked about segregation and discrimination.

There are also important accountability issues which should be raised. Are state education agencies and local school districts collecting data and disaggregating it to reflect the position of black and poor children? Are blacks represented in policymaking boards and as professional staff in the implementation of state educational services?

Noe Medina is a Massachusetts-based educational consultant. He spoke

about the problems of school dropouts, which have gotten little attention in the reports and proposals for education reform.

Noe Medina

The figures on dropout rates are very disturbing. According to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey conducted annually, 73 percent of 18- and 19-year-olds were high school graduates in 1983. For whites the rate was 75 percent, for blacks 59 percent, and for Hispanics 49 percent. By age 22 to 24, there is improvement. Nationwide, 84 percent of 22- to 24-year-olds had high school diplomas — 86 percent of whites, 76 percent of blacks, and 58 percent of Hispanics. Many students either graduate late, go back to school, or most likely, get a GED. Despite big gains over the past few decades, however, one in seven whites, one in four blacks, and almost one-half of the Hispanics do not graduate from high school even by age 22 to 24.

In Medina's view, these figures "highlight the dangers of the education reform movement . . . not so much in its proposals, but in some of the rhetoric . . . which focuses so much on achievement and so little on participation." Medina reiterated the comments of other conference speakers that misuse of testing, standardized curriculum, and extracurricular activities can have dramatic effects on who participates and stays in school. Also, by ignoring the successes of the 1960's and 1970's in increasing school participation, educators ignore policies which produced them.

Medina has drawn tentative conclusions from data about school dropouts over the past few decades:

- It is possible that when equity was a higher national goal, people were "really striving for equity and it was having results."
- People may be ignoring educational alternatives that exist because they are defining the goal so narrowly with the single-minded pursuit of achievement.
- People are missing opportunities to continue gains by failing to discover programs or elements of programs which produced the gains, to refine and improve them, and to continue the process.

Stuart A. Rosenfeld

Stuart A. Rosenfeld is the Director of Research and Programs for the Southern Growth Policies Board. He discussed equity concerns in vocational education. He noted there are several perspectives from which to approach this topic — federal legislation, state expenditures, enrollment results, and the goals in general.

Last year, Congress passed the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, which has a stronger equity focus than previous federal legislation. Rosenfeld has examined recent federal data on vocational education results. From an equity perspective there has been improvement. Women are enrolling in greater numbers in traditionally male courses. However, when specific programs are examined, data show that women and minorities are underrepresented in the programs leading to the highest paying jobs. For example, 1981 data for Georgia showed enrollment in "technical occupation" programs (found only in postsecondary schools, not high schools) was 87 percent male and 84 percent white.

More recently Rosenfeld has questioned whether equity in vocational education, at the high school level especially, is possible given the paradox that it is

> *a program which for so long has represented inequity and inequality. . . . For the most part, it has tracked the low-performing and the low socio-economic status students into programs to get them off the street*

and train them for work.

Students from low economic status families are three times as likely to be in a vocational education track as students from high economic status families.

There are two arguments generally given to justify vocational education as a separate track. The first is based on "demand-side" considerations — education has a responsibility to meet labor market needs and vocational education is the most efficient way to do this. The other is based on "supply-side" considerations — there are youth who are not "making it" in the standard classroom setting and will drop out unless there is an alternative curriculum geared to their interests, and vocational education can meet this need.

Rosenfeld said that students in vocational education have less exposure to the subjects and skills that are considered important today. They especially do not get enough math. Rosenfeld believes there is a need for "vocationalism" as an alternative pedagogy. This is different from most current vocational education. The quality of basic education in a vocational education environment needs to be equivalent to basic education in other programs.

There are several southern states which are now rethinking vocational education. They are concerned about its fairness as an education program. New ideas are emerging which address excellence and equity. Commissions are considering vocational education in Georgia, Tennessee, Texas, and North Carolina. Rosenfeld said,

> *Some are suggesting that high school vocational education become less specialized and less separated from the academic curriculum, allow more time for the basics, and have academic standards as well as vocational education standards, which in the past have just been job placement.*

In Rosenfield's view, there are two routes to equity in vocational education. One is to reduce the specificity and isolation of the programs, especially for those occupations which can be learned on the job and for which general knowledge and skills are important for advancement. The other route is to ensure that programs which require some specialization are of high quality and offer equal access. The latter will require more monitoring.

The Continuing Philanthropic Response to Education Reform

While taxpayers provide the major financial support for education reforms, private foundations have supported crucial education innovations and programs targeted on children with special needs. Foundation representatives addressed the Continuing Conference and discussed a variety of philanthropic approaches to support education reform.

Robert H. Hull, Executive Director of the Southeastern Council of Foundations, introduced this topic. He noted that education is of vast interest to the foundation community. It is the largest consumer of foundation dollars nationwide. Most foundations in the Southeast, with some very notable exceptions, formally maintain that they are not involved in changing public policy on education. Yet many of them support local programs which in fact address education issues. Hull called it the "bubble-up way to deal with educational policy rather than the trickle-down way."

Robert H. Hull

Bernard L. Charles of the Carnegie Corporation, Alicia A. Philipp of the Metropolitan Atlanta Community Foundation, and Bruce Williams of the Rockefeller Foundation discussed foundation responses to education reform. They described a wide array of foundation supported education programs including:

- several exemplary programs already in place to increase minority representation in science and technology;
- programs to improve math and science preparation in junior high schools and to increase the supply of math and science teachers;
- programs to prevent damage to children, with particular focus on dropouts, substance abuse, and prevention of school failure;
- Saturday scholar programs for gifted inner-city students;
- arts in the schools programs;
- alternative schools such as street academies;
- research on emerging issues such as the effects of television viewing on young people and the growing illiteracy of high school graduates;
- the creation of local public education funds;
- church and community organization programs to provide places for study, tutoring, and counseling services for needy high school students;
- initiatives to strengthen the teaching of humanities in urban secondary schools; and
- research and data collection on difficult education issues.

Bernard L. Charles

Alicia Philipp

Bruce E. Williams

Summary

The 1985 Continuing Conference explored fully "the continuing dynamics of education reform." There was disagreement and diversity in the perspectives and analyses of conference speakers and participants. But there was great value in bringing together persons of different views to explore the promise and potential shortcomings of the education reform movement. Out of this exploration may come better understanding of how to realize the goals of education improvement for all children.

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